

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 500

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2977

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: THE 25TH CONGRESS: ON THE FRINGES

1. ACCORDING TO WELL-INFORMED SOVIET SOURCE (WHO, HOWEVER, HAVE NO OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE CONGRESS), EACH DELEGATE TO THE PARTY CONGRESS REPORTEDLY IS PAID 17 RUBLES A DAY FOR FOOD, RECEIVED 13 RUBLES IN POCKET MONEY AND IS GIVEN A FREE HOTEL ROOM. NEARLY ALL OF THE DELEGATES ARE QUARTERED IN THE ROSSIYA HOTEL, INCLUDING ALL THE MOSCOW DELEGATES, WHO WERE REQUIRED TO MOVE INTO THAT HOTEL FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONGRESS. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE (WHO GOT IT SECOND-HAND BUT WAS CONVINCED OF THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION), MANY OF THE DELEGATES, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM RURAL AREAS, WERE GIVEN LARGE SUM OF MONEY TO OUTFIT THEMSELVES AND BUY NEW CLOTHES FOR THE CONGRESS. IN SOME
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CASES THEY EVEN HAD TO APPEAR BEFORE A COMMITTEE WHICH

PASSED ON THEIR SARTORICAL ELEGANCE.

2. THE SAME SOURCES TELL US THAT THE FIVE MEMBER DELEGATION OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY IS STAYING AT A GUEST HOUSE IN LENING HILLS. A CRISIS AROSE WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THERE WERE ONLY TWO BATHROOMS. IN RESPONSE TO THE ITALIAN COMPLAINTS, THE SOVIET CONGRESS' ORGANIZERS OFFERED TO PUT THEM IN A HOTEL. AFTER A LONG INTRA-DELEGATION DISCUSSION, ONE OF THE ITALIAN DELEGATES (WITH EXPERIENCE OF MOSCOW HOTELS) WAS ABLE TO CONVINCE THE OTHERS THAT THEY WOULD BE BETTER HOUSED IN LENIN HILLS.

3. OUR SOURCES ALSO SAY THAT THE STUDENTS IN THE SIXTH CLASS OF A MOSCOW SCHOOL HAD WRITTEN A COMIC REVIEW WHICH POKED MILD FUN AT SOME SOVIET INSTITUTIONS. THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN ORDERED NOT TO ALLOW REHEARSALS OF THE SKIT DURING THE CONGRESS PERIOD FOR FEAR THAT IT MIGHT OFFEND DELEGATES TO THE CONGRESS.

4. OF POSSIBLE INTEREST ARE PERSISTENT RUMORS WHICH WE HAVE HEARD FROM BOTH WESTERN JOURNALISTS AND SOVIET SOURCES THAT THE CONGRESS MAY BE CONSIDERABLY SHORTER THAN WAS THE 24TH, WHICH RAN FOR TEN DAYS. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT KOSYGIN'S MAJOR ECONOMIC REPORT HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 2, WHICH IMPLIES THAT THE CONGRESS WILL LAST A MINIMUM OF EIGHT DAYS, AND PROBABLY LONGER.

STOESSEL

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